

Kevin Holsapple comments in introducing EVSP at White Rock meeting:

1. The EVSP identifies four key goal areas. The process for the group that worked on this in coming to the four key goal areas was to:
  - a. Start with the County's adopted vision and strategic plan statements that have been previously adopted and are in place – these were not invented by the drafting group
  - b. Perform Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats (SWOT) analysis for economic development
  - c. Focus in on goals that can take best advantage of or build upon our strengths in order to address the vision/goals
  - d. It is critical to read the plan with the recognition of the interrelationship of the four goal areas – no one area is meant to trump or be higher priority than another
  - e. BHAG (big hairy audacious goal) level brainstorming on ideas (potential supporting actions) to help illustrate the goals
  
2. One of the areas of discussion at the LA input session earlier this month was to discuss what is different about what is in the draft plan from the status quo of the County relative to ED. There are a number of important differences:
  1. First, the County does not have a current plan that is in active use. The plan will improve the County's ability to communicate to citizens, prospective residents, and potential investors what the economic priorities of the County are and will provide the basis for aligning actions, services, and initiatives toward strategic goals.
  2. Adoption of a targeted list for diversification – the County has never had such a list
  3. Community of choice for our workforce – this is a new concept to serve as a basis for driving actions
  4. Establish goals for population and housing growth – no such goals exist
  5. Addressing normalization of housing markets – (broader concern than “affordable housing” which has been much discussed)

6. Addition of rehabilitation of housing stock as potential approach to addressing future housing needs
  7. Coordination of actions for implementation – there has been no plan to coordinate around and no designated group with the charter to coordinate efforts.
  8. Coordinating team (economic vitality action team) formed from representatives of entities that buy into the plan and that have resources for economic development – there is currently no County team or committee that exists for this purpose (purview)
    - Action plan
    - Development of incentive program
    - Measurement
    - Establish resource plan
    - Land evaluation
    - Policies to increase chances of success
    - Public education
    - Assessment and update
3. Another question that came up had to do with the current economic status of the County – for this meeting I prepared a few observations about our status relative to jobs, wealth, investment, and retail (because for many the most visible face on the local economy is retail):

**The community has maintained high levels of jobs and employment**

- 1.71 jobs in the community for each of our citizens in the work force
  - 16,603 jobs
  - 9705 citizens in the workforce
- 3.2% unemployment rate

**The community has maintained high levels of income and wealth**

- \$102K median household income (2008) – continues to be among highest in nation
- 235% of State’s median household income

- Steady increase in payrolls of local employers

**There has been significant private investment over the past 10-15 years compared to most small, rural communities:**

- New Holiday Inn Express
- New office building at Central Park Square
- 1911 Central major renovation and reuse – “old credit union”
- 999 Central – mixed office/retail
- Reel Deal Theater
- Research Park building 1
- Los Alamos Business Center complex
- Hampton Inn
- Los Alamos National Bank
- First Holiday Inn Express
  
- Los Alamos Plaza to be permitted in coming weeks
  
- There has been a much larger number of smaller private investments – our last several SBDC success clients come to mind ... NM Dance Theater, Coffee Booth, Bilingual Montessori School, Pet Pangaea ... and there are many more

**Retail and consumer service sectors, while in an extremely difficult environment, have fared well here compared to other communities**

- Through the first three quarters of 2009, retail gross receipts in LA County up 1.8%. The comparable number for the entire state is a decline of 6.6%..
  - As an aside, for 2008 retail sales in LA County were up 7.3% from 2007. The state as a whole saw a .8% decline.
  - through the first three quarters of 2009, accommodation and dining gross receipts in LA County up 5.6%. The comparable number for the entire state is a decline of 6.8%.

If jobs, wealth, and investment are the measures of economic vitality we have held our own pretty nicely through difficult times relative to the plight of most rural communities. We have done this without a strategic plan to coordinate action around and with limited investment of resources in having people working on economic development.

The plan suggests that there are some additional things that are important to do (i.e. diversification, quality of life improvements, addressing the question of growth) to continue to sustain our base and improve our future – effectively addressing these

additional things will require decisions about how much resources should be put to achieving the plan and will benefit from coordinating action aligned with the plan..